

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 02664 281045Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
INRE-00 IO-14 SSM-05 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 /081 W
-----061129 281048Z /14

O 281015Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1530
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 2664

DEPT FOR NEA; USIA FOR INA

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (ATHERTON, ALFRED Q)
SUBJ: REMARKS TO THE PRESS BY ASST SEC ATHERTON AT BEN GURION
AIRPORT BEFORE LEAVING TO CAIRO, FEB 28, 78

1. FOLLOWING ARE REMARKS TO THE PRESS BY ATHERTON AT B-G
AIRPORT BEFORE LEAVING TO CAIRO, TUESDAY MORNING, FEB 28:

2. Q: (ISRAELI NEWS REPORTS SAY THAT YOU WILL END YOUR
SHUTTLE NEXT WEEK BECAUSE NO PROGRESS IS BEING MADE...)
WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE?

3. A: WELL, IVE SAID FROM THE BEGINNING THAT I PLAN TO
CONTINUE THE EFFORTS WITHOUT ANY TIME LIMIT. I WILL
OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON A FEW DAYS BEFORE
PM BEGIN'S VISIT. SO THAT CREATES A POINT AT WHICH ILL HAVE
TO GO BACK TO WASHINGTON, BUT AT THIS POINT THATS THE
ONLY DEADLINE I HAVE IN TERMS OF MY MISSION, WHICH CONTINUES,
AND I THINK WERE IN A PROCESS AND WE'RE DOING GOOD WORK AND
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WE'RE GOING TO CONTINUE WORKING AT IT.

4. Q: DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU RETURN TO CAIRO WITH A GOOD
BASIS TO CONTINUE THE PROGRESS?

5. A: OH, I THINK SO. I THINK I HAVE THE BASIS TO CONTINUE
THE EFFORTS: I'M NOT IN A POSITION - WHICH I'VE SAID MANY

TIMES - TO GET INTO THE DETAILS OR THE SUBSTANCE, BUT LET ME SAY THAT I'LL BE COMING BACK IN A DAY OR TWO AND I JUST URGE YOU ALL TO BE PATIENT. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT AND COMPLICATED PROCESS BUT IT'S GOING FORWARD.

6. Q: MR ATHERTON, YOU SAID A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO THAT YOU BELIEVE ONLY THAT ISRAEL....(INAUDIBLE). DO YOU STILL BELIEVE IN THAT? AT LEAST THAT WAS WRITTEN IN THE PAPERS HERE.

7. A: I AM SORRY, I DIDN'T HEAR THE QUESTION.

8. Q: THE QUESTION IS: A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO, IT WAS PUBLISHED IN THE PAPERS THAT YOU SAID THAT ONLY IF ISRAEL AGREES TO FULL RETREAT OUT OF SINAI, THERE IS A CHANCE FOR A PEACE TREATY IN THE AREA. DO YOU STILL BELIEVE IN THAT?

9. A: WELL, FIRST OF ALL, I'M NOT GOING TO CONFIRM THAT THAT IS WHAT I SAID. THERE'RE LOTS OF THINGS WRITTEN AND I WOULD CAUTION AGAINST BELIEVING EVERYTHING THAT IS ATTRIBUTED TO ME. I'M NOT GOING TO GET INTO THE SPECIFICS OF WHAT WE'RE DISCUSSING BUT I WOULD SIMPLY SAY THAT WE'RE GOING TO GO ON WITH THE EFFORT.

10. THANK YOU VERY MUCH. LEWIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV02664
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780091-0544
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978021/aaaaaapb.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d1b1cdcc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3423513
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REMARKS TO THE PRESS BY ASST SEC ATHERTON AT BEN GURION AIRPORT BEFORE LEAVING TO CAIRO, FEB 28, 78
TAGS: OVIP, SOPN, IS, EG, (ATHERTON, ALFRED Q)
To: STATE USIA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d1b1cdcc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014